was 15.3 per cent in 1993-94, 23.1 per cent in 1994-95, 36.4 per cent in 1995-96, 13.2 per cent in 1996-97, 11 per cent in 1997-98, 15.6 per cent in 1998-99. The process of removal of Quantitative Restrictions on most agricultural items began on 1.4.2000. The import growth rate during the year 2000-2001 was only 7.27 per cent in rupee terms and 0.27 per cent in US dollar terms. The growth rate of imports during the first nine months of financial year 2001-2002 was only 0.31 per cent in Dollar terms and 4.55 per cent in Rs. terms, compared to the same period for the previous year. The overall picture that emerges is thus one of normal trading activity in response to demand and supply factors.

(c) In order to boost agricultural exports, quantitative and packaging restrictions on export of wheat and its products, butter, pulses, grain and flour of barley, maize, bajra, ragi and jowar have been removed. Export restrictions like registraiton and packaging requirements on butter, wheat and wheat products, coarse grains, groundnut oil and cashew to Russia have also been removed. Restrictions on export of all cultivated (other than wild) varieties of seed, except jute and onion removed. To promote export of agro and agro based products, 20 agri export zones have been notified. In order to promote diversification of agriculture, transport subsidy will be available for export of fruits, vegetables, floriculture, poultry and dairy products, the details of which are being worked out. 3 per cent special DEPB rate for primary and processed foods exported in retail packaging of 1 kg. or less has also been announced.

Investment climate of States

3117. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the joint-study conducted by World Bank and CII which has identified poor investment climate in States like Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, while classifying Maharashtra and Gujarat as best investment climate States; and

(b) if so, whether Government have any plan to identify the reasons for this poor investment climate, and taking time-bound steps

in co-ordination with respective State Governments to make these States comparatively significantly competitive?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the study, poor infrastructure, excessive management time being spent with Government officials on regulatory issues, inadequate port facilities, relatively high delays in custom houses, excessively high power cost, etc., have been identified as the main reasons for poor investment climate.

Industrial development including attracting investment, as well as creating good investment climate in various States is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments concerned. Central Government supplements their efforts by providing incentives under various schemes operated by it.

Quality of exported items

3118. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of consignments of wheat, basmati rice, tea, milk products, fish and coffee for exports to other countries contain fertilizers and hazardous pesticides; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to regulate and monitor the use of fertilizers and hazardous pesticides, already banned in some foreign countries, at the field level to boost the export of these items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) As per information available with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, Tea Board, Coffee Board and Export Inspection Council, no complaints have been received in respect of consignments of wheat, basmati rice, tea, milk products, fish and coffee for exports to other countries in this regard.